

Strange Southern Landlords Live As Gypsy Tribe

WANDERING homeless through the South yet doing an annual cash business of hundreds of thousands of dollars; living in tents like gypsy nomads yet the owners of many city lots and valuable town property, some of it worth a thousand dollars a front foot; such is the strange life of the Irish clan of "Carroll, Riley & Co.," composed of the Carrolls, Rileys, Sherlocks and Gormans, all from County Roscommon, Ireland.

Luxurious seems a strange word to apply to the mode of life of this or any other wandering clan, but luxurious it is indeed, for it must be realized that whole squares in many of the largest and most thriving cities of the South are owned by this clan and held vacant throughout the year that they may, possibly, spend a few weeks each year camping there. Close down in the very centre of Atlanta, Ga., they own a whole city block; all about it are towering office buildings, factories and a few residences, but the Irish clansmen refuse to sell or build permanent structures of any sort upon this property. It is well piped with city water and sewers, however, and when the tents are pitched there for a summer stop beneath every spread of canvas is a hydrant and a sink, for these Irish are health-loving, sensible people and know and observe the laws of hygiene and sanitation a great deal more closely than do the majority of people who live more sheltered lives indoors.

In other cities of the South, too, they hold much property, in Chattanooga, in Nashville, in Rome, Ga., and Cartersville, Ga., in several smaller towns in Georgia and other States through which they wander.

The vacant lot on which the clan, or the Atlanta branch of it (for there are nearly five hundred members scattered throughout the South, though all keep in touch with and are governed by Thomas Carroll, head of the Atlanta division), camp in Atlanta each summer occupies a whole square at Bellwood avenue and Ashby street and is estimated to be worth between \$80,000 and \$100,000 by real estate dealers of that city. In each of the other cities where the clan owns property at least one big square is kept vacant and ready for their use whenever they may want to camp there, but on much of their property there are big business houses, mills, factories and residences, for this is a thrifty clan and they build houses for other folks to live in humans do when they can get free of the and pay them rent; owning wood and brick and metal walls and roofs, they let others occupy them, while they live under canvas on neat, smooth wooden floors since the members of the strange organization came to America from Ireland, twenty years ago, and formed the association they have vastly increased their wealth by shrewd dealings, while the towns when they formed the association



A Typical Irish-Gypsy Camp in the South.

has grown enormously in value and multiplied their wealth, though they were in debt when they first came to America. Every mother's son of them as much as thirty years old or thereabouts was born in County Roscommon, Ireland.

Each division of the big clan has its summer headquarters. In the warm weather they have little to do except collect their rents, for summer is their rest time. When the blood is thin the Carrolls and Rileys and Sherlocks and Gormans live as naturally as the animal instincts of man prompt him to live, idly and at ease, in cool shade and unworried comfort. But when the blood thickens with the first cool weather forecasting winter, even before the snow flies in the States further north, they fold their tents and discard their idle ways and move South with the birds, plying their honest trade in beasts of burden as they go.

Though no outsiders enter the community, through marriage or otherwise, the laws of the Catholic Church against intermarriage with relatives closer than third cousins (and then only by special dispensation) are rigidly observed. Inasmuch as the second generation is just now at the marrying age and the first generation has no ties of blood, this observance is not difficult.

"We celebrated a wedding the other day," said Mr. Thomas Carroll, head of the clan, to a newspaper man who visited the camp at Atlanta recently. "The bride was one of our young ladies and the bridegroom came from the Gainesville (Ga.) contingent, which is now moving toward Chattanooga. The wedding was solemnized in the Immaculate Conception Church, here in Atlanta, and the celebration afterward in our camp was a big affair. Lots of our friends in Atlanta were invited. The young couple will stay with our camp."

Prohibitionists will pronounce their benediction upon the Carroll, Riley & Co. camps, "for," said Mr. Carroll, "there's not a man among us that touches liquor." Lovers of peace will also pin a badge on Carroll, Riley & Co. "We leave fighting to cats and dogs," said Mr. Carroll. "We never have to put down any trouble, because there is never any trouble to put down. But" (and there was a twinkle in his blue eyes as he spoke) "we let the youngsters have their fill of it, if they want to fight, while they're young. It's their nature and it's good for them. It teaches them not to be afraid of trouble if it comes looking for them."

Deprived of the usual advantages of public schools, the members of the clan of Carroll, Riley & Co. pay well for the schooling of their children, when the youngsters get to an age when they can learn readily. And the Church—for they are to a man good Catholics—and their parents look well after their morals.

Ho! for Oak Island's Pirate Gold—Sought Since the Year 1795, It May Now Be Found

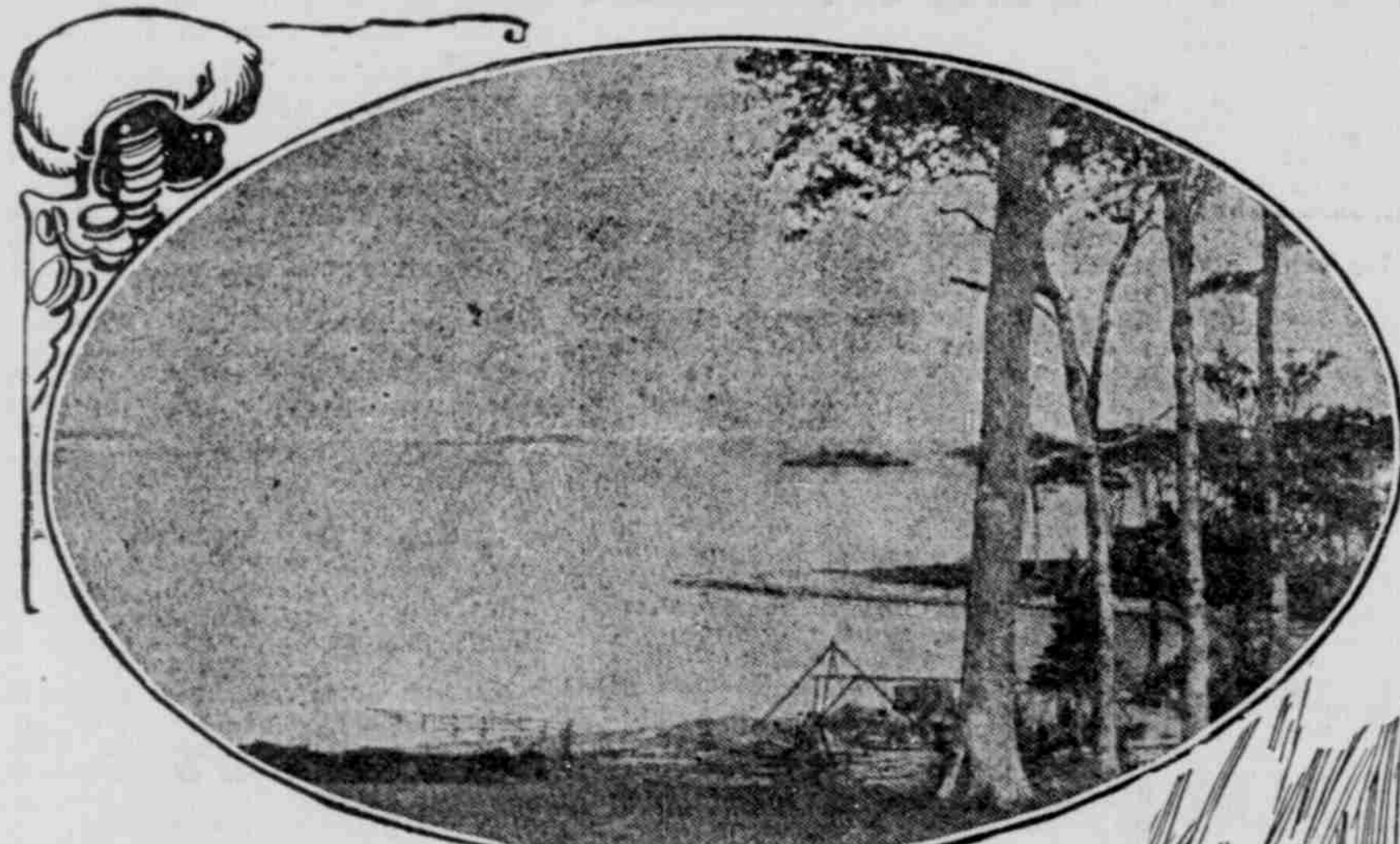
ROMANCE, adventure, curiosity, greed—all these are mighty factors in the activities of men.

There is a little island situated about four miles from the town of Chester in Nova Scotia whose history bears witness to the astonishing energy which may be engendered by a combination of these motives—an energy tireless, persistent, dauntless, not to be turned aside from the task it has set out to accomplish, however difficult, however hopeless this task may seem.

Beneath the thick, unyielding clay of this little island tradition for more than a hundred years has declared that there lie buried huge chests of Spanish gold, gleaming ornaments, cumbersome antique pieces, barbaric in their splendor, fit to deck kings and courtiers in the days when kingly state recognized no obligation to play a part in the drama of simplicity.

Oak Island, of all the pirate islands in which later generations have delved for treasures, has offered the most stubborn resistance to the excavators. In the case of other buried treasures the difficulty which has beset the seekers after pirate gold has usually been the exact determination of a locality. Complicated maps offered by mysterious natives, the descendants of the friends or relatives of the original pirates, and to be had only for fabulous prices from the heirs, have usually figured as of paramount importance in the organizing of expeditions to search for the treasures. In Oak Island the problem of regaining this long sought for wealth has been a different one. The spot where the chests containing the treasures are buried has for more than a century been pretty well agreed upon. The difficulty has been to get deep enough down underneath the island to dig out the treasure without flooding the shaft with water and thus compelling a cessation of labor.

But in spite of these difficulties the old haunts of the pirates have been allowed to rest in peace, untroubled by those who crave the buried gold, for only a few years at a time. Excavation expeditions have continued to spring up from time to time since 1795, when the first important effort to find the treasure was put forth. Since then science has come to the aid of adventure and systematic attempts have been made to dig up the treasure, but all in vain. Science has even gone so far as in the case of an expedition headed by engineers to deny, after a failure to locate the treasure, the possibility of any such buried wealth. This, however, has not deterred later adventurers from putting their courage to the test in the search, and there is now being organized another expedition

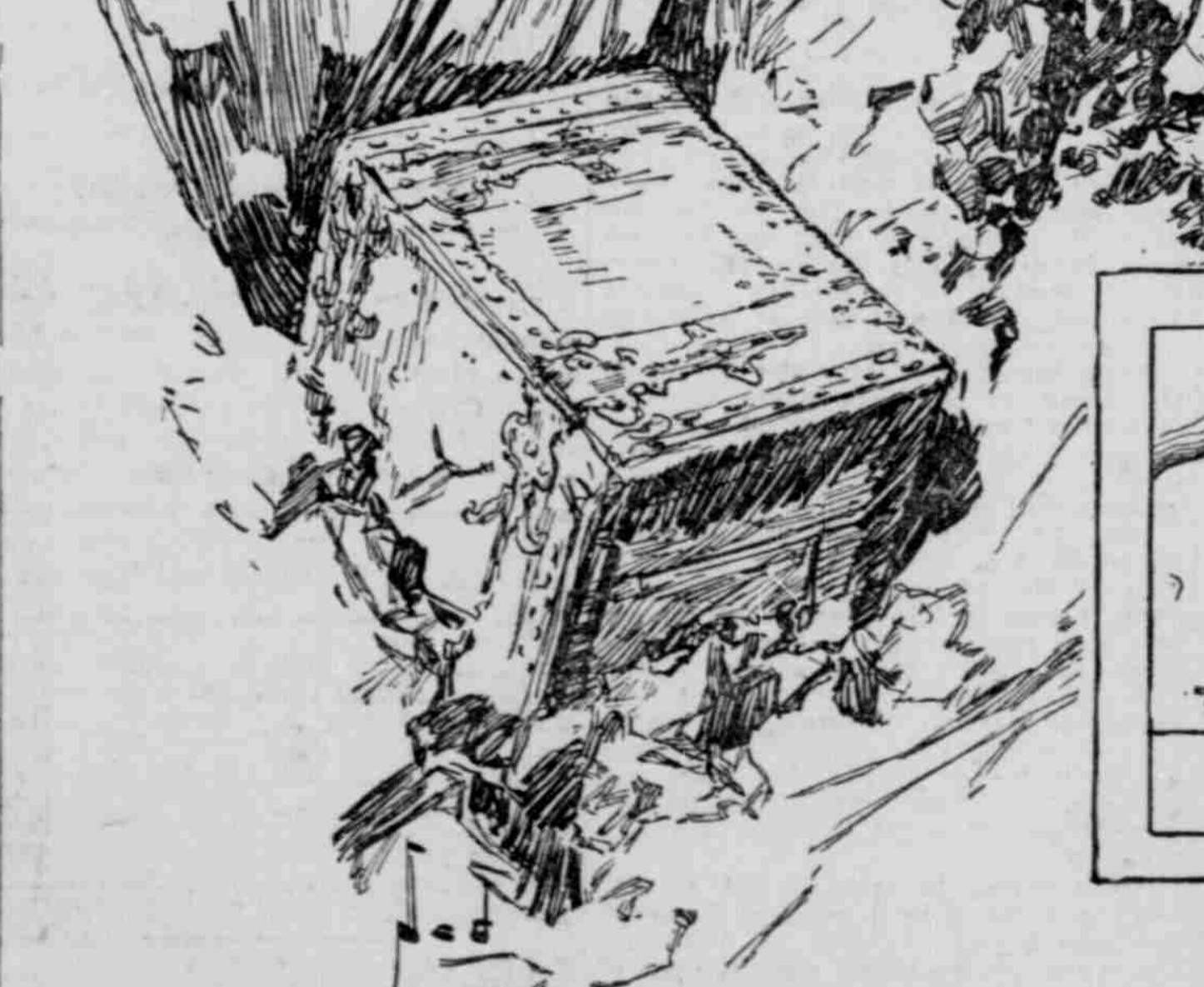


Smith's Cove. Showing the Old Fashioned Hoisting Whim Near the Shore.

ploring party which will seek to mine out the deeply interred gold and jewels. Professor C. L. Williams, of Soldiers' Grove, Wis., is the leading spirit in this latest treasure hunt, which, if all goes as well as its sanguine promoters believe, will solve this fascinating puzzle.

Perhaps the pirates considered that the great depth to which they sunk their treasure chests was sufficient of a guard for them, or perhaps time played them a trick in exposing certain appearances of the earth which gave evidence that it had been disturbed for extraordinary purposes. At any rate, the signs of pirate visits to the island were by no means obscure even so long ago as 1795, when three men whose names were Smith, MacGinnis and Vaughn, who had paddled over from the mainland on an idle visit to the island, in the course of a desultory stroll came upon an old clearing on which grew plants foreign to the locality, red clover among them. A large tree which stood in the centre of this clearing bore "balistic" signs, such as were in common use among the freebooters, and on examining the spot more closely the young men discovered a depression, circular in shape, about twelve feet across, and very evidently due to some artificial condition.

Later explorations of the island resulted in equally interesting finds. A great stringbolt was found fastened to a rock in the landing place of the island, now known as Smith's Cove; a boat-sailor's whistle, of the sort in vogue in the days of the buccaneers, was found near the bolt, and, most thrilling of all,



a coin dated 1713 was picked from the soil. It was only a copper coin, and although it weighed an ounce and a half its value was infinitesimal. Nevertheless, it was the last link in the chain which connected the peculiar discoveries with pirate treasure.

The young men at once began digging in the depressed spot under the great oak tree, and it was evident before they had gone very far that they had struck an old shaft. The walls were hard, and here and there the pick marks could be seen. The earth inside the shaft was so loose that it came away easily. At a depth of ten feet they came upon a layer of planking, a second layer of planking was found at twenty feet, and a third layer ten feet further down.



MAP OF THE WORKINGS ON OAK ISLAND
1. Money Pit. 2. Pit, 110 feet; a century old. 3. Pit, 100 feet; fifty years old. 4. Pit, 75 feet; fifty years old; no water. 5. Pit, 25 feet; fifty years old; water. 6. Pit, 118 feet; forty-five years old; water. 7. Pit, 50 feet; forty-five years old; water. 8. Excavation on shore. 9. Pirates' Tunnel. 10. Smith's house. 11. Barn. 12. Pit, 130 feet; fresh water. 13. Pit, 145 feet; no water. 14. Pit, 90 feet; caved in. 15. Pit, 300 feet; caved in. 16. Pit, 108 feet; salt water. 17-19. 80 to 90 feet; salt water. 20. Cook house. 21-24. Pits, 25 to 40 feet.

will flames and startling apparitions which issued from the diggings at night.

Some of the residents of the neighborhood even declared that they had seen strange seafaring men striding about in their broad-topped sea boots, cutlass in belt, ribbons in their beards and their heads bound up in gory bandages. Shocking oaths that hurtled over the water, the sound of a ship making moorings, the grating of a dory on the shore and the steady reverberation from the picks coming through the black midnight furnished the orchestral accompaniment to the ghastly drama. After a few of these stories had gone the rounds it was not easy to win recruits for the excavation expedition, and the project of getting at the pirates' gold was temporarily abandoned.

The next important effort to disinter the treasure took place a few years later. At this time the shaft was sunk ninety-five feet in the spot in which work had already been started. In addition to the oak planking which was found to be laid at intervals of ten feet the workmen found layers of charcoal and of putty, these being laid on a matting of cocoon fibre. At a depth of ninety feet the workmen discovered a large stone which

was curiously inscribed with engraved characters. The stone was taken out and set in a fireplace which belonged to Mr. Smith, one of the trio of original investigators.

The digging went on beyond the point where the stone had lain and five feet further down another wooden platform appeared. The men quit work for two days, as it was Saturday night. To their disgust when they returned to work on Monday morning they found the shaft filled with water. It was impossible to bale out the water, and they decided to sink a new shaft east of the first one. The first pit was later distinguished from later excavations as "the money pit."

The new shaft was sunk to the depth of a hundred and ten feet without striking water, but when the diggers attempted to drive a shaft toward the money pit, with the object of getting underneath the first shaft and possibly striking the treasure, water rushed in from that point and the workmen had to flee for their lives.

It was not until 1849 that another company was formed for getting at the pirates' gold. In the meantime interest in the venture had been greatly excited by the deciphering of the signs on the large stone which had been found in the first shaft. This stone had been taken to Halifax and studied by many persons, and at least one of these men had been able to give a direct translation. He declared that the message on the stone was:—

"TEN FEET BELOW TWO MILLION POUNDS LIE BURIED."

The new expedition decided to work the old money pit, but this and all subsequent efforts were defeated by the flow of water, which it was by this time believed came from the subterranean tunnel which had been dug by the pirates. A search was made for the entrance to this tunnel, and it was found on the beach hidden from sight by a compact mass of beach rock. After these rocks had been removed five drains were discovered, formed by lines of rocks laid like the ribs of a fan.

Innumerable attempts have been made at intervals of a few years to reach the treasure, but when the water has not driven the workmen from the shafts the money of the company has given out. In 1905 one of the diggers brought further proof of the existence of the treasure in a few links of a Spanish chain and an old Spanish coin. Those who live in the neighborhood of the island have all the faith in the world in the buried wealth, and whenever an excavating expedition is formed the survivors of former searching parties are glad and eager to become members of the new company.